

## MEDICAL CONTROL GUIDELINE: ALTERED LEVEL OF CONSCIOUSNESS

### PRINCIPLES:

1. Evaluation and documentation of the patient's level of consciousness are key components of a thorough patient assessment.
2. Signs and symptoms of altered level of consciousness (ALOC) may present as disorientation to person, place or time; confusion; lethargy; impaired cognition; coma; inappropriate aggressiveness; or hostility. These findings should alert EMS personnel to the possibility that the patient may have a serious underlying medical condition.
3. The patient's baseline level of consciousness should be taken into consideration when evaluating whether the ALOC finding represents an acute change or is normal for the patient.

### GUIDELINES:

1. Assess orientation by asking the patient the following:
  - a. Name
  - b. Where they live/where they are
  - c. Day of week/year/time of dayPatients unable to reasonably answer one or more of the above shall be considered to have ALOC.
2. Utilize the appropriate Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) to assess the neurological status of all patients. Report and document the GCS in the following order: eye opening, verbal response, and motor response.

	Adult	Child (1-4 yrs.)	Infant
<b>EYE OPENING</b>			
4	Spontaneous	Spontaneous	Spontaneous
3	To voice	To voice	To voice
2	To pain	To pain	To pain
1	None	None	None
<b>VERBAL RESPONSE</b>			
5	Oriented	Oriented	Smiles and coos appropriately
4	Confused	Confused	Cries and consolable
3	Inappropriate	Inappropriate	Persistent inappropriate crying and/or screaming
2	Incomprehensible	Incomprehensible	Grunts or is agitated or is restless
1	None	None	None
<b>MOTOR RESPONSE</b>			
6	Obedient	Obedient	Spontaneous
5	Purposeful	Localized	Localized
4	Withdrawal	Withdrawal	Withdrawal
3	Flexion	Flexion	Flexion
2	Extension	Extension	Extension
1	None	None	None

**NOTE: For patients unable to communicate or patients with a language barrier, estimate appropriateness of motor response, obedience, and verbal response by consulting with the family and/or primary caregiver(s), if applicable.**